

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention teaches a variety of techniques and mechanisms for controlling and monetizing networking transactions among users of a computer network. At least some of these techniques and mechanisms come about as a result of several new paradigms contemplated by the present invention. One paradigm of the present invention involves monetizing user transactions as a function of relational patterns and connections between different users. Another paradigm of the present invention introduces a "virtual network" as a set of user having some predefined relational pattern. Once virtual networks are defined for a plurality of users, decisions regarding transactions can then be made based on the characteristics of the virtual network.